

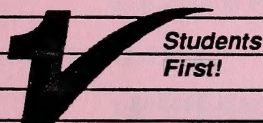
NOV 27 1991

Student Achievement Testing Program Bulletin

# Grade 6 English Language Arts



1991-92 School Year



**Student Evaluation**

**Alberta**  
EDUCATION

This bulletin contains general information about the 1992 Student Achievement Testing Program, and information specific to the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test. Additional copies of this bulletin may be obtained by telephoning Alberta Education at 427-0010.

**DISTRIBUTION:** Superintendents of Schools • School Principals and Teachers • The Alberta Teachers' Association • Alberta School Boards' Association • Officials of Alberta Education • General Public upon Request

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Achievement Testing Program provides Alberta Education, school jurisdictions, and the public with information significant at the provincial and local levels about what students know and can do in relation to objectives of the *Program of Studies*. It does not provide information to be used for student placement or promotion.

The achievement tests are administered on a four-year cycle in four subject areas: language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science; and at three grade levels: 3, 6, and 9.

The achievement tests are specific to the *Program of Studies* prescribed by the Minister of Education. Classroom teachers from across the province are extensively involved in developing and field testing the questions.

Information pertaining to the nature and administration of the Achievement Testing Program, exemptions, and students receiving instruction in French can be found in the Achievement Testing Program General Information Bulletin, 1991-92, which has been mailed to all superintendents and principals.

During 1992, the achievement tests will be administered according to the following schedule:

### Tuesday, June 9, 1992

Grade 3 Social Studies (a.m.)

Grade 6 English Language Arts      Part A: Writing (a.m.)  
Part B: Reading (p.m.)

Grade 9 Mathematics\* (a.m.)

### Thursday, June 11, 1992

Français 6<sup>e</sup> Année      Part A: Writing (a.m.)  
Part B: Reading (p.m.)

\* A French translation of this test is available and must be administered at the same time as the English test. Schools will be sent enrolment forms from Alberta Education by February 1992 requesting an indication of which test versions are required (English/French). These forms must be returned through jurisdiction offices by March 6, 1992.

## Reporting Achievement Test Results

In September 1992, each school jurisdiction will receive a district profile and school reports for their students' achievement, as well as guidelines for interpreting these results in relation to provincial standards.

In December 1992, provincial results will be made public through the annual *Provincial Report, Achievement Testing Program*.



## **Broadened Assessment Initiatives**

During the past year, the Student Evaluation Branch initiated the development of assessment instruments designed to collect a broader base of information in order to provide a better picture of what students know and can do. This development resulted in the field testing of these instruments in the spring of 1991.

- **Grade 3** - across curriculum portfolio assessment  
- across curriculum thematic test
- **Grade 6** - performance tasks in mathematics and science  
- aural communication skills in language arts
- **Grade 9** - performance tasks in mathematics and science  
- participation skills in social studies

Later this fall, information describing the above broadened assessment instruments will be communicated to all schools and jurisdictions. This will include examples from the instruments and some preliminary results of student performance. The Student Evaluation Branch will continue to develop, revise, construct, and field test broadened assessment instruments in the coming year. For further information, contact Greg Hall, Acting Program Manager, Achievement Testing Program at 427-0010.

## **GRADE 6 LANGUAGE ARTS ACHIEVEMENT TEST**

Following are the major points of information regarding the design of the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test:

1. The Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test is designed to reflect the Grade 6 Language Arts curriculum specifications that have been developed from the *Program of Studies for Elementary Schools*, 1978 (amended 1981). Because implementation of the Language Learning Program of Studies 1991 is optional during the 1991-92 school year, blueprints for Part A: Writing and an explanation of specific learner expectations, blueprints for Part B: Reading and information on reporting by levels appears in the appendices (pages 29 - 37).
2. The Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test is composed of two sections:  
  
Part A: Writing, to be administered during an 80-minute period on the morning of June 9, 1992.  
  
Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice), to be administered during a 1-hour period in the afternoon of June 9, 1992.
3. To complete Part A: Writing, students will be given a writing prompt and allowed to choose the format that would best fit their approach to the prompt (narrative, letter, diary/journal entries, etc.). The person who administers the test will read the instructions and the story prompt aloud to the students.



4. The booklet for Part A: Writing includes pages labelled IDEAS/PLANNING, ROUGH DRAFT, and FINAL DRAFT. This format is designed to reflect the writing process model. Although specific marks for planning and drafting will not be allotted, markers will be advised to take planning and drafting into consideration when scoring student work.
5. Part A: Writing will be scored for CONTENT, ORGANIZATION, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, VOCABULARY, and CONVENTIONS (see scoring guides - pages 11 to 15).
6. Students may use an ENGLISH DICTIONARY while writing Part A of the test. No other type of dictionary is authorized.
7. Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) consists of 50 multiple-choice questions based on reading selections taken from fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, and visual media.
8. The booklet for Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) will contain reading selections and questions. Answers will be recorded on a separate machine-scored answer sheet.
9. Students may NOT use a dictionary while writing Part B.

## **PART A: WRITING**

Part A: Writing is designed to encourage students to choose a format that would best fit their personal approach to the writing prompt (narrative, letter, diary/journal entries, etc.).

The blueprint of Part A: Writing (page 6) is followed by a sample assignment for classroom use. This sample assignment illustrates the kind of writing assignment that will appear on the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test in June, 1992.

Scoring guides follow on pages 11 to 15. Teachers should discuss the sample assignment and scoring guides with their students, keeping in mind that the scoring guides are written for teachers. Consequently, technical terms will require explanation.

### **Development of Part A: Writing**

Test developers and teacher committees observed the following general guidelines as they developed the writing assignment and scoring guides for the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test:

1. The writing assignment and scoring guides should assess skills presented in the curriculum specifications for Grade 6 English Language Arts that were developed from the *Program of Studies for Elementary Schools 1978 (amended 1981)*.
2. The assignment and test format should reflect the writing process model of pre-writing (thinking and planning), writing, and revision.
3. The assignment statement should provide focus. An assignment that is too general is to be avoided.
4. The writing prompt should be constructed so that it provides a context and identifiable characters, but it must be broad enough in scope to encourage a wide range of approaches.



5. The assignment should be one that can be completed in a period of 80 minutes, allowing some time for planning, drafting, and revision.

## **Scoring of Part A: Writing**

### **Selection of Markers**

**Part A: Writing** will be scored by Grade 6 teachers selected from those who have been recommended as markers to the Student Evaluation Branch by their superintendents. To qualify for recommendation by a superintendent, a prospective marker must already have taught Grade 6 English Language Arts for two or more years, currently be teaching Grade 6 English Language Arts, and have a valid permanent Alberta teaching certificate.

Superintendents will be contacted in the spring of 1992 for their recommendations. Approximately 150 teachers will be selected on superintendents' recommendations in order to ensure that there is a proportional representation from the various regions of Alberta. Markers will be contacted in April or May. The list of markers will be finalized no later than June 15, 1992.

Many more teachers are recommended as markers by superintendents than are required by the Student Evaluation Branch. The following criteria are considered when markers are selected for the marking session:

- Experience as a Marker (generally, "first time" markers are given priority)
- Regional Representation (by zone, jurisdiction, and school)
- Student Population

### **Dates for Scoring**

**Part A: Writing** will be scored in Edmonton during the week of July 13 to 17, 1992. Group leaders will meet on Monday, July 13, 1992

### **Scoring Procedures**

Markers will be trained in the application of scoring guides, and sample papers will be discussed prior to the actual scoring of Part A. Consistency in scoring will be monitored closely.

Each student's paper will be scored by one marker only. Scoring guides appear on pages 11 to 15 of this bulletin. At the time of scoring, the markers will be instructed to focus upon the success of a student's writing within each scoring category. Work in the planning and drafting space will be considered in the event that the student's paper includes incomplete revised work.

## Confirming Standards

Confirming standards is a process whereby teachers, who are selected for marking, are asked to make judgments about the achievement test to answer the question of whether province-wide performance is good enough. For more information on the confirming standards process, refer to the *Provincial Report, Achievement Testing Program, June 1990 Administration*. For more information on the selection of teachers for participation in the confirming standards process, refer to the *Achievement Testing Program, General Information Bulletin, 1991-92*.

## Blueprint for Part A: Writing

The blueprint that follows on page 6 outlines Part A of the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test. The blueprint delineates the categories under which summary data will be reported to school jurisdictions.



**Part A: Writing  
Blueprint  
Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test**

Reporting Category (Scoring Guide)	Description of Writing Assignment	Range of Marks
<p><b><u>CONTENT (Selecting details to achieve a purpose)</u></b></p> <p>Events and/or actions should be plausible and appropriate to the student's purpose for communicating. The student should be able to select details to describe characters and settings that are appropriate within the context or terms of reference established by the student.</p> <p><b><u>DEVELOPMENT (Organizing details into a coherent whole)</u></b></p> <p>The student should be able to place events in a coherent sequence.</p> <p><b><u>SENTENCE STRUCTURE (Structuring sentences effectively)</u></b></p> <p>The student should be able to use a variety of sentence structures effectively in writing.</p> <p><b><u>VOCABULARY (Selecting words and expressions correctly and effectively)</u></b></p> <p>The student should be able to use words and expressions effectively in writing.</p> <p><b><u>CONVENTIONS (Using the conventions of language correctly and effectively)</u></b></p> <p>The student should be able to communicate clearly in writing by adhering to appropriate spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.</p>	<p>The writing assignment follows a writing prompt that will be read aloud to the students. The assignment allows the student to select the format that would best fit his/her approach to the prompt.</p>	<p>5 - Excellent 4 - Proficient 3 - Satisfactory 2 - Limited 1 - Poor INS - Insufficient</p>

## **Part A: Writing Sample Assignment**

The sample assignment and instructions that follow are similar in format and content to those that will be presented in the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test.

### **GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- In this test you are asked to write from a prompt. The format you choose is up to you (narrative, letter, diary/journal entries).
- If you want to write down your ideas AND/OR make a plan before you write, do so on the IDEAS/PLANNING page.
- If you want to do a first draft of your work, do so on the pages labelled FIRST DRAFT.
- Write your final draft on the pages labelled FINAL DRAFT.
- Remember that you may make changes and corrections on your final draft.
- Your story will be evaluated on WHAT you say and HOW WELL you say it (on CONTENT, DEVELOPMENT, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, VOCABULARY, and CONVENTIONS).
- You may use an ENGLISH DICTIONARY.
- You have 80 minutes to complete this test.



After your teacher has read the following writing prompt, use your imagination to write about what happens next. Choose the writing format (narrative, letter, diary/journal entries) that would allow you to do your best writing.

**APRIL**

**1992**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

It was Saturday morning. My birthday had finally arrived. Mom and Dad had hinted that I would get an extra special present. My grandparents had already given me a Nintendo for Christmas, so I had no idea what was in store for me.

I was bubbling with excitement. Little did I know how that present would change my life!

**REPORTING CATEGORY: CONTENT**

When marking CONTENT, the marker should consider

- the effectiveness of ideas/details/specifics chosen by the writer (as they relate to the format/type of the response).
- how effectively the purpose is achieved
- whether the reader's interest has been captivated and maintained

CONTENT as is appropriate at the Grade 6 level.

- 5 EXCELLENT:**
- The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is clearly established and sustained.
  - The ideas and/or details used by the writer to fulfil the assignment are usually effective, specific, and appropriate.
  - Supporting details are precise and often creative.
  - Such writing may be lively and/or imaginative.
- 4 PROFICIENT:**
- The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is clearly established and generally sustained.
  - The ideas and/or details used by the writer to fulfil the assignment are often effective, specific, and appropriate.
  - Supporting details are relevant and well-defined.
  - Such writing may demonstrate an attempt to go beyond the basic requirements of the assignment.
- 3 SATISFACTORY:**
- The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is established but may not be sustained.
  - The ideas and/or details chosen by the writer to fulfil the assignment are appropriate but conventional.
  - Supporting details are relevant but general.
  - Such writing fulfils the basic requirements of the assignment but does so matter-of-factly.
- 2 LIMITED:**
- The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is vaguely established and may not be sustained.
  - The ideas and/or details chosen by the writer to fulfil the assignment are inappropriate and/or superficial.
  - Supporting details are scant and/or vague, and/or irrelevant.
  - Such writing does not fulfil the assignment completely.
- 1 POOR:**
- The writer's purpose may be unclear; if a purpose is stated or implied, it is not sustained.
  - Such writing shows a confused notion of what is required in the assignment.
  - Details are inappropriate or lacking.
  - Such writing may be frustrating for the reader.
- INS INSUFFICIENT:**
- The student has written so little that it is not possible to assess the content OR the marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfil the assignment.



## REPORTING CATEGORY: ORGANIZATION

When marking ORGANIZATION, the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- focus
- coherent order
- connections between events and/or details
- closure

ORGANIZATION as is appropriate at the Grade 6 level.

- 5 EXCELLENT:**
- The introduction is purposeful and interesting and clearly establishes an appropriate focus that is sustained throughout
  - Events and/or details are arranged in a purposeful and effective order, and coherence is maintained.
  - Transitions, either explicit or implicit, effectively connect events and/or details.
  - Closure is evident and purposeful.
- 4 PROFICIENT:**
- The introduction is purposeful and clearly establishes an appropriate focus that is generally maintained throughout.
  - Events and/or details are arranged in a purposeful order, and coherence is generally maintained.
  - Transitions, either explicit or implicit, appropriately connect events and/or details.
  - Closure is related to the focus.
- 3 SATISFACTORY:**
- The introduction is functional and establishes a focus that may be inconsistently maintained.
  - Events and/or details are arranged in a discernible order, although coherence may falter from time to time.
  - Transitions may be missing in places or may not be appropriate.
  - Closure is mechanical or artificial.
- 2 LIMITED:**
- The introduction may lack purpose and/or may not be functional; any focus established by the writer may not be maintained.
  - Purposeful arrangement of events and/or details is not clearly discernible, and coherence falters frequently.
  - Transitions are rarely used.
  - Closure may be unrelated to the focus.
- 1 POOR:**
- The introduction, if present, is not functional or is inappropriate; no focus is established.
  - The arrangement of events and/or details is haphazard and incoherent.
  - Transitions are lacking or are used inappropriately.
  - Closure is inappropriate, unconnected, or missing.
- INS INSUFFICIENT:**
- The writing has been awarded an INS for CONTENT

## REPORTING CATEGORY: SENTENCE STRUCTURE

When marking SENTENCE STRUCTURE, the marker should consider

- the degree to which the writer frames grammatically correct sentences
- the effectiveness and variety of sentence type and length

SENTENCE STRUCTURE as is appropriate at the Grade 6 level.

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 5 EXCELLENT:      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled.</li><li>• Sentence type and length are effective and varied; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if used, are used successfully for effect.</li></ul>             |
| 4 PROFICIENT:     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sentence structure is controlled.</li><li>• Sentence type and length are usually effective and varied; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if used, may not be used successfully for effect but do not impede meaning.</li></ul> |
| 3 SATISFACTORY:   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sentence structure is generally controlled.</li><li>• Sentence type and length are sometimes effective and varied; run-on sentences and/or fragments, if used, occasionally impede meaning.</li></ul>                                    |
| 2 LIMITED:        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Control of sentence structure is sometimes lacking.</li><li>• Sentence type and length are rarely effective and varied; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if used, often impede meaning.</li></ul>                             |
| 1 POOR:           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Control of sentence structure is generally lacking.</li><li>• There is no deliberate variation of sentence type or length; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if used, severely impede meaning.</li></ul>                       |
| INS INSUFFICIENT: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The writing has been awarded an INS for CONTENT</li></ul>  |



## REPORTING CATEGORY: VOCABULARY

When marking VOCABULARY, the marker should consider

- the effectiveness and accuracy of the words and expressions selected by the writer

VOCABULARY as is appropriate at the Grade 6 level.

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 5 EXCELLENT:      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specific words and expressions are carefully selected with an awareness of connotative effect.</li><li>• Words are used accurately and deliberately to fulfil the purpose.</li></ul>  |
| 4 PROFICIENT:     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specific words and expressions show some evidence of careful selection and some awareness of connotative effect.</li><li>• Words are used accurately and often effectively.</li></ul> |
| 3 SATISFACTORY:   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General words and expressions are sometimes used where specific words would have been more effective.</li><li>• Words are generally used accurately.</li></ul>                        |
| 2 LIMITED:        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General, rather than specific words predominate.</li><li>• Specific words, if present, are frequently misused.</li></ul>  |
| 1 POOR:           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General words that convey only vague meanings are used.</li></ul>   |
| INS INSUFFICIENT: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The writing has been awarded an INS for CONTENT</li></ul>   |

## REPORTING CATEGORY: CONVENTIONS

When marking CONVENTIONS, the marker should consider the extent to which the writer has control of

- mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.)
- grammar (agreement of subject-verb/pronoun-antecedent, pronoun reference, etc.)

PROPORTION OF ERROR TO LENGTH AND COMPLEXITY OF RESPONSE MUST BE CONSIDERED.

CONVENTIONS as are appropriate at the Grade 6 level.

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 5 EXCELLENT:      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The writing is essentially free from errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.</li><li>• Any errors that are present do not reduce the clarity of the communication.</li></ul>                 |
| 4 PROFICIENT:     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The writing has few errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.</li><li>• Errors that are present seldom reduce the clarity of communication.</li></ul>  |
| 3 SATISFACTORY:   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The writing has occasional errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.</li><li>• Some of these errors may reduce the clarity of communication.</li></ul>   |
| 2 LIMITED:        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The writing has frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.</li><li>• Some of these errors reduce the clarity of communication.</li></ul>   |
| 1 POOR:           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The writing has numerous errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar that are both noticeable and jarring.</li><li>• Most of these errors severely reduce the clarity of communication.</li></ul> |
| INS INSUFFICIENT: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The writing has been awarded an INS for CONTENT</li></ul>  |



## PART B: READING (MULTIPLE CHOICE)

Part B: Reading (Multiple-choice) in the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test consists of 50 multiple-choice questions based on reading selections from fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, and visual media.

The achievement test blueprint for Part B: Reading (page 17) is followed by sample questions. These questions illustrate the nature and complexity of questions that appear on the Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test. They do not, however, reflect the exact emphasis indicated in the achievement test blueprint (page 17). The blueprint for the sample questions is on pages 29.

### Development of Part B: Reading (Multiple-choice)

Reading selections were chosen according to the following general guidelines:

- Reading selections, whenever possible, should be relatively short, but should be complete works containing a beginning, middle, and end.
- Reading selections should reflect the interests of the majority of Grade 6 students.
- Reading selections should be of appropriate difficulty for Grade 6 students.
- Canadian content should be used extensively.

The following guidelines provided direction for question development:

- Questions related to each reading selection should be arranged from least to most difficult or from specific to general, whenever practical.
- Questions should test the student's ability to understand and analyse the reading selections and to make judgments about their form and content. Only questions dealing with significant aspects of the reading selections should be asked.
- The multiple-choice test blueprint must be based on the curriculum specifications for Grade 6 Language Arts that were development from the *Program of Studies for Elementary Schools 1978* (amended 1981).

### Blueprint for Part B: Reading (Multiple-choice)

The blueprint for Part B: Reading (page 17) shows the reporting categories and cognitive levels under which questions are classified, and indicates the number of questions in each category. A minimum of six questions will be classified under each reporting category so that meaningful results of student achievement can be reported.

**Part B: Reading  
Blueprint\*\*\*  
Grade 6 Language Arts Achievement Test**

Reporting Category	Curriculum Specifications Reference	Cognitive Levels*			Totals	
		Literal	Inferential	Evaluative	No. of Questions**	% of Test**
<b>1. IDENTIFYING THE ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS</b> The student should be able to attend to and analyse elements of the author's organization such as: sequence, purpose, comparison, cause/effect, and imagery in a reading selection.	I.A. 9, 13, 14 II.A. 5, 8, 10 II.B. 3 III.B. 1 IV.A. 1, 2, 3 V.A. 2				10	20
<b>2. ANALYSING DETAILS</b> The student should be able to attend to and analyse the inter-relationship of the details in a reading selection.	I.A. 2, 9, 11 II.A. 2, 7 II.B. 3				20	40
<b>3. ASSOCIATING MEANING</b> The student should be able to associate meanings of words and expressions in context and evaluate appropriateness of word choice.	I.A. 3 II.A. 3 II.B. 2 IV.B. 1				10	20
<b>4. SYNTHESIZING IDEAS</b> The student should be able to synthesize the information within the reading selection in order to construct meaning. The student should be able to synthesize ideas from the entire reading selection in order to deduce the main idea and to predict plausible outcomes or conclusions.	I.A. 1 II.A. 1, 7 II.B. 3 II.C. 1 II.D. 1, 2 IV.A. 1, 2, 3				10	20
<b>No. of Questions**</b> <b>Per Cent of Test**</b>		6-8 15	30 60	11-13 25	50	100

- \* The boxes under Cognitive Levels are empty since numbers of questions will vary depending upon the reading selections chosen to appear on the achievement test. An example of a completed blueprint is on page 26.
- \*\* All numbers and percentages are approximate and will vary to some extent depending upon selections chosen.
- \*\*\* This blueprint is based on the Program of Studies for Elementary Schools 1978 (amended 1981).



## **Explanation of Cognitive Levels**

- **Literal Understanding**

When answering questions listed in the blueprint under Literal Understanding, the student is required to identify or to remember, either by recall or recognition, supporting details and cause-and-effect relationships that are directly stated in reading selections. When answering vocabulary questions listed under Literal Understanding, the student is required to recall word meanings.

- **Inferential Understanding**

When answering questions listed in the blueprint under Inferential Understanding, the student is required to understand, through analysis, interpretation, and extrapolation, the meanings, details, and relationships that are implied in reading selections.

- **Evaluation (Judgment)**

When answering questions listed in the blueprint under Evaluation, the student is required to make judgments about the relative importance or value of the alternatives present in the question.

Student must select the BEST answer when answering evaluation questions. In such questions, each alternative has a measure of truth. The student must evaluate the alternatives in the context of the reading selection in order to select the BEST answer.

The Part B: Reading sample questions follow. They illustrate the nature and complexity of the questions that will appear on the test. Background information for each multiple-choice question is provided. In addition to having a keyed response, each question is classified according to its cognitive level. The difficulty level of the questions, which indicates the percentage of students who answered the question correctly on field tests, is also given. For example, a difficulty level of 0.431 means that 43.1% of the students answered the question correctly. Please note that this sample of questions does not represent the emphasis of the course. The weightings assigned to the different course objectives for the actual test appear in the blueprint on page 15 of this bulletin.

I. Read the information below and answer questions 1 and 2.

from Spring Cleanup at Legoland

Workers toting brushes and buckets of soapy water tower like giants over brightly colored buildings. You can hear the scratching of bristles scrubbing and the whoosh of water spraying. There's a bustle in the air. It's spring cleanup time at Legoland park.

5 Legoland is a theme park in the town of Billund, in Denmark. In Legoland park, visitors find exact, pint-sized copies of real and imaginary European towns. They take safaris through a land teeming with wildlife. They gaze up with awe at "Mount Rushmore" which looks down on a Wild West town. It all takes up an area the size of 19 football fields. And it's all made of plastic Lego building blocks.

10 Ready for the place for season opening on May 1 is a big job. Some 34 million blocks make up Legoland park. It takes 50 people a full month to wash all the models and to install the smaller ones that have been stored for winter. The workers drain and refill canals and seaports. Gardeners landscape the grounds and prune tiny trees and shrubs.

15 Exposed constantly to the weather, the colors of the models fade after four or five years. Every year, worn out models are rebuilt or replaced with new ones.

New models are built in the park's design studio. There, 20 people work full time constructing new buildings and figures for the park. There's no shortage of possibilities. Just six Lego blocks of the same color can be combined 102,981,500 different ways!

20 Designers work from sketches and plans to build a scale model of snapped-together Lego blocks. Then they build the final model to the desired size. This time the blocks are glued into place. Glue protects the model from being torn apart by wind, rain, and ice.

25 Lego blocks came about because of the Great Depression, or economic slump, of the 1930's. A Billund carpenter, Ole Kirk Christensen, turned to toy making when he could no longer find work building homes. Only one of his toys really took off, but one was enough. Today, Lego blocks are sold in 115 countries. The Lego group estimates that children in Europe alone play with Lego toys a total of five billion hours a year.

30 Legoland park opened in 1968 to solve a problem at Billund's Lego factory: So many people wanted to tour the place that they were interfering with the work. Next year, nearly a million tourists will visit Legoland park.

*National Geographic World Magazine*



1. "Workers ... tower like giants" (line 1) indicates that the workers are

- A. standing on a tall building
- B. surrounded by curious children
- \* C. big compared to the small buildings
- D. big compared to the people of Legoland

Reporting Category: Associating Meaning

Cognitive Level: Inferential

Difficulty Level: 0.451

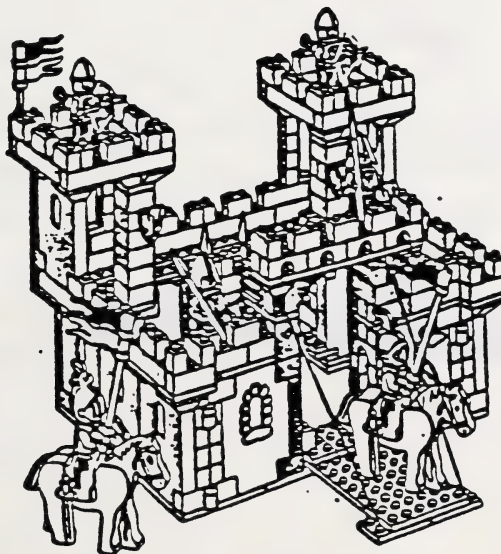
2. The word "bustle" (line 3) refers to a

- A. cool mist
- B. freshness
- C. harsh sound
- \* D. flurry of activity

Reporting Category: Associating Meaning

Cognitive Level: Inferential

Difficulty Level: 0.430

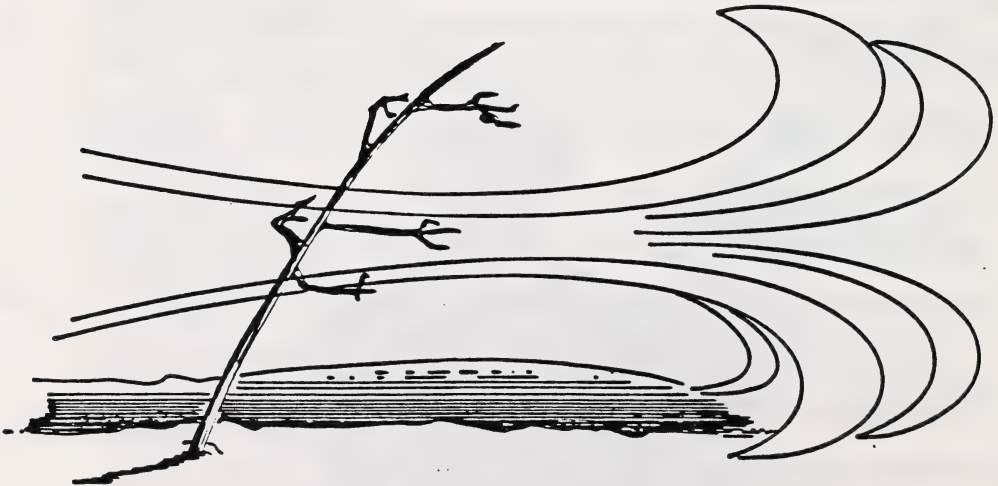


II. Read the poem below and answer questions 3 and 4.

### The North Wind

- Once, when I was young I knew the wind.  
I called "Wi-ind, North Wi-ind"  
And it came,  
tramping the grass so that it lay flat,  
5 And whinnied high and shrill like a whistle.  
I saddled it with imagination,  
and bridled it with dreams.
- And I got on and we went, and the trees  
bowed down in our passing.  
10 I was exhilarated with the speed  
and lay down on his neck to keep  
balance.  
And his snowy mane whipped about my face.  
His unshod hoofs made no sound  
15 as he trod on the stars.  
His breath made icicles on the houses  
we passed  
And then he bucked.

*Joanne Lysyk*





3. As a young child, the poet thinks of the North Wind as a

- A. guide
- \* B. friend
- C. magician
- D. destroyer

Reporting Category: Synthesizing Ideas

Cognitive Level: Inferential

Difficulty Level: 0.706

4. The "trees bowed down" (lines 8-9) suggests that the

- A. trees were very old
- \* B. wind was very strong
- C. wind was exciting
- D. trees were heavy with icicles

Reporting Category: Analysing Details

Cognitive Level: Judgment

Difficulty Level: 0.770

III. Read the story below and answer questions 5 and 6.

from *Cowboys Don't Cry*

*Shane's horse, Angel, has been caught on an old barbed wire fence. He and Casey are able to cut her loose.*

I saw Angel's body heaving upward above me. I rolled away from the scrambling hoofs.

I opened my eyes a second later. Angel was on her feet, snorting and shaking. Casey was on the ground with mud all over her but she was still holding onto the halter rope.

She didn't move as I got up and eased over to Angel. "I've got her," I said, and Casey let go of the rope and slowly stood up.

Casey walked slowly around Angel. "The back leg's bad. I'd better get my mother."

"Your mother?"

"Yeah. She's a vet. Our place is next to yours and her clinic's there. Try and lead the horse down to the barn where there's some light. We'll meet you there."

Every step seemed like forever. I didn't think Angel would make it down to the barn. And I wasn't sure I wanted her to. The way that leg was dragging, I was afraid she was walking to a mercy-killing.

The lights were on in the barn and a van was parked outside.

Casey's mom hardly noticed me as she started sweet-talking Angel, running her hands over her neck and shoulders, gradually working her way back to the hind leg.

"Bring that light over here so I can get a good look, Casey," she ordered.

Casey shone the light right on the wound and I got a good look, too. I also just about got sick. Through the shredded flesh was oozing blood, the light caught the dull white gleam of bone. I turned away and leaned my face against Angel's neck, wishing I was dead.

Mrs. Sutherland sighed. "Well, there's a chance."

She gave Angel a couple of needles that calmed her down a lot. Then she went to work, cleaning, cutting, and sewing. She did the surface cuts first. She just put some kind of salve on most of them but she put a couple of stitches in Angel's chest.

Then, she started on the leg. She probed around in the cut for a while. Then she looked up. "Well, you can thank God the tendons aren't cut. If they were gone . . ." She didn't need to finish the sentence.

She worked on the leg for a long time. Finally, she wrapped the whole joint in some kind of stretchy bandage and straightened up slowly, as if her back hurt. "That's about it. Now all we can do is wait and see."

"Will she get better?" I asked. I must have sounded about six years old, but I couldn't help it.

Mrs. Sutherland smiled, a tired, sad kind of a smile that made me think she'd been asked that question a lot of times and that the answers had never been easy. "No promises, kid - but I've seen some pretty hopeless cases fool the experts."

I guess I must have looked about six right then, too, because suddenly, she put her arm around me and gave me a big hug. I'd never been hugged by a vet before but it sure felt good. "Don't give up on her yet. She's got good stuff in her."

Marilyn Halverson



5. The line that indicates what prompted Mrs. Sutherland to comfort Shane is

- A. "I was afraid she was walking to a mercy-killing" (lines 14-15)
- B. "I leaned my face against Angel's neck, wishing I was dead" (lines 23-24)
- C. "I must have sounded about six years old" (line 35)
- \* D. "I guess I must have looked about six right then" (line 40)

Reporting Category: Associating Meanings

Cognitive Level: Literal

Difficulty Level: 0.429

6. "I've seen some pretty hopeless cases fool the experts" (line 39) suggests that

- A. another vet should look at Angel
- \* B. Angel still has a chance to recover
- C. vets are not usually right
- D. Angel is a weak horse

Reporting Category: Synthesizing Ideas

Cognitive Level: Inferential

Difficulty Level: 0.586

IV. Read the play below and answer questions 7 and 8.

from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

*The Television-Chocolate Testing Room. It is completely bare except for a large television camera at one end, a large television screen at the other, and several bright floodlights. All enter as scene opens.*

WILLY WONKA: (*Hopping up and down with excitement*) Here we go! This is the Testing Room for my very latest and greatest invention - Television Chocolate!

MIKE TEAVEE: But *what* is Television Chocolate?

5 WILLY WONKA: Good heavens, child, stop interrupting me! It works by television. I don't like television myself. I suppose it's all right in small doses. They want to sit there all day long ... staring at staring at the screen -

MIKE TEAVEE: That's me!

10 WILLY WONKA: The very first time I saw ordinary television working, I was struck by a tremendous idea. If a photograph could be broken up into millions of pieces, and the pieces sent whizzing through the air until they hit an antenna, and then put together again on a screen - why couldn't I send a *real* bar of chocolate whizzing through the air in tiny pieces, and then put the pieces together at the other end, all ready to be eaten?

MIKE TEAVEE: Impossible!

15 WILLY WONKA: Think so? Watch me send a bar of chocolate from one end of this room to the other - by television. Bring me that chocolate bar, please. (*CHARLIE brings over an enormous bar of chocolate from offstage*) It has to be big, because whenever you send something by television, it always comes out much smaller than it was when it went in. Here we go then! Get ready!

20 (*MIKE wanders curiously toward the camera*) No! No! Stop! You there! Mike Teavee! Stand back! You're too close! There are dangerous rays coming out of that thing! They could break you up into a million tiny pieces in one second! (*MIKE backs away*) That's better! now then, switch on! (*Lights flash and bar disappears through slit in curtain*)

25 GRANDPA JOE: (*Waving his arms and shouting*) The chocolate's gone!! WILLY WONKA: It's on its way! It's now rushing through the air above our heads in a million tiny pieces. *Quick!* Come over here! (*All dash over to the other side of the stage, to TV screen*) Watch the screen! (*Small bar of chocolate appears through slit in curtain and lighted screen*) Take it!

30 MIKE TEAVEE: (*Laughing*) How can you take it? It's just a picture on a television screen! (*CHARLIE reaches out and the chocolate miraculously goes into his hands*)

GRANDPA JOE: It's absolutely fantastic! It's ... it's ... it's a miracle!

35 WILLY WONKA: Just *imagine* - when I start using this across country, a commercial will flash onto the screen and a voice will say, "Eat Wonka's Chocolates! They're the best in the world! If you don't believe us, try one for yourself ... now!!!!"

GRANDPA JOE: Terrific!

*Roald Dahl*

7. The words in the brackets

- A. add more detail to the story
- \* B. tell what the actors should be doing
- C. highlight certain parts of the story
- D. help the actors understand the script

Reporting Category: Identifying the Organization of Ideas

Cognitive Level: Literal

Difficulty Level: 0.681

8. Willy Wonka created this experiment MAINLY to

- A. show the powers of TV
- B. transport his chocolates
- \* C. advertise his chocolates
- D. show what a good inventor he was

Reporting Category: Associating Meaning

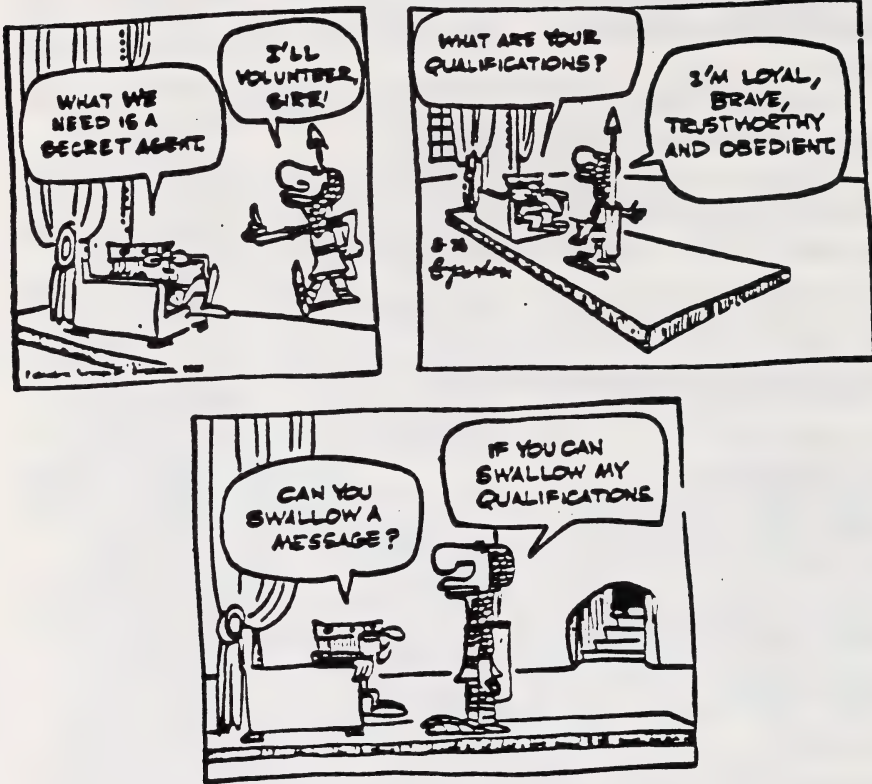
Cognitive Level: Judgment

Difficulty Level: 0.646



V. Consider the cartoon below and answer question 9.

The Wizard of Id



by permission of Johnny Hart and NAS, Inc.

9. The word "swallow" as used by the knight means

- A. eat
- \* B. believe
- C. determine
- D. understand

Reporting Category: Synthesizing Ideas

Cognitive Level: Inferential

Difficulty Level: 0.487

Part B: Reading  
Blueprint\*\*\*  
SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Reporting Category	Curriculum Specifications Reference	Cognitive Levels*			Totals	
		Literal	Inferential	Evaluative	No. of Questions**	% of Test**
1. IDENTIFYING THE ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS The student should be able to attend to and analyse elements of the author's organization such as: sequence, purpose, comparison, cause/effect, and imagery in a reading selection.	I.A. 9, 13, 14 II.A. 5, 8, 10 II.B. 3 III.B. 1 IV.A. 1, 2, 3 V.A. 2	7			10	20
2. ANALYSING DETAILS The student should be able to attend to and analyse the inter-relationship of the details in a reading selection.	I.A. 2, 9, 11 II.A. 2, 7 II.B. 3			4	20	40
3. ASSOCIATING MEANING The student should be able to associate meanings of words and expressions in context and evaluate appropriateness of word choice.	I.A. 3 II.A. 3 II.B. 2 IV.B. 1	5	1, 2	8	10	20
4. SYNTHESIZING IDEAS The student should be able to synthesize the information within the reading selection in order to construct meaning. The student should be able to synthesize ideas from the entire reading selection in order to deduce the main idea and to predict plausible outcomes or conclusions.	I.A. 1 II.A. 1, 7 II.B. 3 II.C. 1 II.D. 1, 2 IV.A. 1, 2, 3		3, 6, 9		10	20
No. of Question** Per Cent of Test**		6-8 15	30 60	11-13 25	50	100

- \* The boxes under Cognitive Levels show the distribution and classification of the sample questions in this bulletin.
- \*\* All numbers and percentages are approximate and will vary depending upon selections chosen.
- \*\*\* based on Program of Studies for Elementary Schools (amended 1981)

# GRADE 6 LANGUAGE ARTS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

## Target Group

The Grade 6 Language Arts course is intended for all students enrolled in the regular Grade 6 program.

## Purpose of Performance Standards

The grade 6 performance statements are intended to help educators develop a shared, province-wide understanding of *acceptable* and *excellent* standards for Grade 6 Language Arts.

Presented on the following pages are **DRAFT** statements that describe what is expected of Grade 6 students who are demonstrating an *acceptable* or an *excellent* standard on independent work at the end of the Grade 6 Language Arts Program. Once finalized, these statements will represent the standards against which provincial and/or local achievement will be compared. By comparing actual provincial results with provincial standards, decisions can be made about whether achievement is in fact "good enough." The standards inherent in these statements are derived from the goals and objectives of Grade 6 Language Arts Program of Studies 1982 (revised).

## Acceptable Standard

### Writing

Students who are achieving at an *acceptable* standard can deal with a familiar idea in writing such as the narration of a personal experience, however, they may have difficulty when confronted with writing tasks that require more complex and/or original thought. Because their writing skills are still developing, their work tends to be quite general and matter-of-fact. Such students can organize concrete, factual material that contains straight forward ideas. They may recognize more complex techniques of literary structure or organization such as cause and effect, foreshadowing and flashback, but may be unable to use that knowledge to consciously apply such techniques in their own writing. Because these students may begin writing before they plan or have a clear vision of where they are headed, the end product may not be uniformly plausible to the reader. They tend to "play it safe" and take few risks with their writing.

### Reading

Most students who are achieving at an *acceptable* standard are able to read relatively short, simple selections of fiction, non-fiction, prose, and poetry and can clearly and correctly identify the main idea, sequence of events, key details, author's purpose and imagery used. These students are generally able to associate meanings of less specific words and expressions in context.



Most students who are achieving at an *acceptable* standard can analyse details and synthesize ideas only if the content is familiar and the experience is close in time to their own experience. Most students' skills may be sufficiently well developed to allow them to answer literal (idea, detail, and relationship) questions. Fewer students performing at an acceptable standard are able to understand ideas, details, and relationships that are implied in a reading selection. When these students are asked to answer questions at the judgment level, where they must evaluate the alternatives in the context of the reading selection in order to select the BEST answer, they experience considerable difficulty and are therefore less successful and may become frustrated.

## **Standard of Excellence**

### **Writing**

Students who are achieving at the *excellent* standard can competently and confidently deal with writing tasks that require more complex and/or original thought. Students at the *excellent* standard coherently develop and organize more abstract, complex material. They can consistently establish an appropriate focus for communication and select ideas and language to suit different purposes and audiences. These students consistently recognize more complex techniques of literary structure or organization such as cause and effect, foreshadowing and flashback, and can purposefully use their knowledge to apply such techniques in their own writing.

### **Reading**

Most students who are achieving at the *excellent* standard can effectively deal with abstract and complex details and ideas found in longer, more sophisticated selections of fiction, non-fiction, prose, and poetry, and readily take risks with unfamiliar material. These students have the ability to read and reflect on print and non-print text from many perspectives; for example, they can distinguish between fact and opinion and are aware how the opinions expressed in the media affect the views, attitudes, and actions of society. They analyse and evaluate ideas received from a wide variety of materials and understand how analysis can deepen appreciation for the work.

Students performing at the *excellent* standard answer literal and implied (idea, detail, and relationship) questions with little difficulty. Many more are able to answer questions at the judgment level, where they must evaluate the alternatives in the reading selection in order to select the BEST answer.



## **APPENDIX A**



**Part A: Writing Blueprint**  
**Grade 6 English Language Arts Achievement Test**

Specific Learner Expectation	Language Learning Component General Concept Statement	Language Learning Component Specific Concepts
EXPLORING	C. Identification and Setting of purpose D. Awareness of Structure of Literature and Language	C.1, C.2, C.3 D.1, D.2, D.3, D.4, D.5, D.6
CONSTRUCTING	G. Associations and Connections H. Analytical Thinking I. Synthesis J. & K. Evaluate	G.3, G.4 H.1, H.2, H.3, H.6, H.7, H.8, H.9, H.10, H.11, H.12 I.2, I.3, I.4, I.5 J.1, K.4, K.5
COMMUNICATING	M. Organize and refine N. Format and purpose	M.1, M.2, M.3, M.4, M.5, M.6, M.7, M.8, M.9, M.10 N.1, N.2, N.3, N.4, N.5, N.6, N.7, N.8, N.9, N.10

These are specific concepts that are taken from the *Language Learning Program of Studies 1991*. These concepts should be reflected in the students' writing.

All written assignments will be evaluated in 5 areas: content\*, organization\*, sentence structure, vocabulary, and conventions. These are the reporting categories.

Range of Marks: 5 - Excellent, 4 - Proficient, 3 - Satisfactory, 2 - Limited, 1 - Poor, INS - Insufficient.

A mark of 4 or 5 would be considered "above level". A mark of 3 would indicate "at level" performance. Lower than 3 would be considered "below level".

\*Content and Organization are each weighted twice as much as any other category.

## **Explanation of Specific Learner Expectations from Writing Blueprint - Grade 6**

### **Exploring**

*Identifying and setting a purpose helps to focus writing experiences.*

- The students can -
- develop plans or pose questions to organize their investigation of new information or ideas;
  - select and write on topics of interest to themselves and others.

### **Constructing**

*The ability to make associations and connections is essential to the communication of meaning.*

- The students can - use figurative language in their writing.

*The ability to think analytically is necessary for critical writing.*

- The students can -
- distinguish fact from opinion and relevant from irrelevant
  - recognize how point of view influences communication
  - recognize how foreshadowing increases anticipation and provides clues to story outcomes and use this strategy in their writing

*The ability to synthesize is necessary to the understanding and retention of ideas and information.*

- The students can -
- classify or categorize information and ideas, using strategies such as mind-mapping, webbing, clustering
  - summarize or paraphrase information and ideas on a particular topic from several sources.
  - focus their writing on important ideas related to topics, themes or concepts and provide support for the ideas.
  - relate what they know to new information and ideas to make generalizations

*Learning is enhanced when learners assume responsibility for checking their growing and understanding.*

- The students can -
- revise their initial writing drafts by elaboration, addition, or substitution of ideas or information, or by deletion of redundant or irrelevant ideas.

## Communicating

*Effective communication depends on coherent organization and precise expression of ideas.*

- The students can -
- focus their writing on a topic or theme by connecting introduction, development and conclusion
  - link ideas using appropriate techniques
  - co-ordinate and subordinate several ideas within sentences
  - delineate ideas or objects in series or lists using appropriate punctuation cues
  - use a variety of sentence structures
  - produce grammatically correct sentences
  - refine and polish word choices when editing
  - use paragraphs, quotations marks and correct punctuation in written dialogue
  - spell frequently used vocabulary words correctly
  - apply knowledge of spelling patterns when attempting to spell unfamiliar words
  - produce manuscripts of cursive writing that is consistent in style and orientation.

*Communication is enhanced when the language is formed and structured to match the writer's purpose and intended audience.*

- The students can -
- use conventional formats for formal letters
  - retell a personal experience and reflect on its biographical significance
  - retell a story from 3rd person perspective
  - provide logical explanation or instructions
  - develop a logically supported argument
  - provide support for opinions
  - compose stories that contain elements of story structure
  - use dialogue in stories to advance plot and develop character



## **APPENDIX B**

**Part B: Reading  
Blueprint\***  
**Grade 6 Language Arts Achievement Test**

Reporting Category Specific Learner Expectation	Language Learning Component and General Concept Statement	Language Learning Component Specific Concept(s)	Question Distribution by Cognitive Level			Number of Items	Approx % of Test
			Literal	Inferential	Judgment		
EXPLORING	D. & E. Aware of Structure of Literature and Language	D.1, D.2, D.3, D.5, E.1, E.2					20
CONSTRUCTING	G. Associations/ Connections	G.1, G.2, G.3, G.4, G.5, G.6					80
	H. Analytical Thinking	H.1, H.2, H.3, H.4, H.5, H.6, H.7, H.8, H.9, H.10, H.11, H.12					
	I. & K. Synthesis	I.1, I.3, I.4, I.5, K.5					
TOTAL ITEMS			10	25	15	50	100
TOTAL PERCENT			20	50	30	100	100

\* Based on Language Learning Program of Studies 1991

**Part B: Reading  
Blueprint®  
SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

Reporting Category Specific Learner Expectation	Language Learning Component and General Concept Statement	Language Learning Component Specific Concept(s)	Question Distribution by Cognitive Level			Number of Items	Approx % of Test
			Literal	Inferential	Judgment		
EXPLORING	D. & E. Aware of Structure of Literature and Language	D.1, D.2, D.3, D.5, E.1, E.2	7				20
CONSTRUCTING	G. Associations/Connections	G.1, G.2, G.3, G.4, G.5, G.6	5	1, 2	8		80
	H. Analytical Thinking	H.1, H.2, H.3, H.4, H.5, H.6, H.7, H.8, H.9, H.10, H.11, H.12			4		
	I. & K. Synthesis	I.1, I.3, I.4, I.5, K.5		3, 6, 9			
TOTAL ITEMS			10	25	15	50	100
TOTAL PERCENT			20	50	30	100	100

\* Based on Language Learning Program of Studies 1991; this blueprint shows the distribution and classification of the sample questions used in this bulletin.





## **APPENDIX C**

## **GRADE 6 LANGUAGE LEARNING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

The 1992 Provincial Report, Achievement Testing Program will contain a section that describes grade 6 students' performance on the June 1992 Achievement Test, relative to levels that are intrinsic to the Language Learning Program of Studies, 1991.

Even though individual student's achievement will not be identified according to a specific level, students will be identified as achieving "at", "beyond", or "not yet at level."

### **Levels of Performance**

#### **Writing**

##### **"At Level" Performance**

These students will be able to fulfill the basic requirements of the assignment in a matter of fact way. Their writing will probably demonstrate little risk taking. (See scoring guide, pages 9 - 13. Satisfactory descriptors provide details.)

##### **"Beyond Level" Performance**

Because students in this category approach writing tasks with confidence and competence, they will be able to successfully go beyond the basic requirements of the assignment. Their work will show maturity and will most likely be lively and or imaginative. (See scoring guide, pages 9 - 13. Proficient and Excellent descriptors provide details.)

##### **"Not Yet At Level" Performance**

These students will be unable to fulfill even the basic requirements of the assignment. Their writing may appear immature when compared to "At Level" writing. (See scoring guide, pages 9 - 13. Limited and Poor descriptors provide details.)

#### **Reading**

##### **"At Level" Performance**

Students in this category will understand most of the reading passages that are level appropriate. They should be able to correctly answer most of the three types of cognitive level questions based on these passages; although they will probably have more difficulty with the judgment questions.

##### **"Beyond Level" Performance**

Students in this category will understand all level appropriate reading passages as well as those that are at a higher level. They should be able to answer most of the three types of cognitive level questions based on all passages regardless of their difficulty level. The judgment questions will be much less difficult for these students.

##### **"Not Yet At Level" Performance**

Students in this category will have difficulty understanding passages that are level appropriate and therefore, answering the many types of questions will prove to be problematic for them.



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